The Curse of the Day.

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RICHMOND, VA:
TAYLOR & TAYLOR PRINTING CO.
1907.

THE CURSE OF THE DAY

ACT 1.

SCENE 1—Mr. Randolph's *library.* Mr. Randolph *reading a newspaper. His manager,* Tom Bollen *is announced.*

Randolph. Come in Tom. Take a seat. What is going on at the works

Bollen. Nothing of importance, sir. I called to talk over some of the details of that last order. It must be filled within the next sixty days. That is a very short time to fill an order of such importance.

Ran. Tom, you have been my manager for some twenty-seven years, have you not?

Bol. I have, sir.

Ran. Well, in that time we have never had a cross word, have we?

Bol. Not one, sir.

Rand. Well, Tom, that order must be filled. There are reasons of the utmost importance for it, and you must tell the men to brace up and do the job. It will be a reflection on the works for us to fail in it, and every employee we have is interested in seeing the works succeed.

Bol. That is so, Mr. Randolph, and every man in your employment recognizes the fact. I will tell the men just what you say, and you may make your mind easy. If the order can be filled it will be done.

Ran. By the way, Tom, how many men do the works employ?

Bol. About one thousand, sir.

Ran. And almost all of them have families, have they not

Bol. Yes, sir.

Ran. And all of them own their own homes around the works, do they not?

Bol. Yes, sir.

Ran. Then we have a contented, happy family of some five thousand persons living around the works and supported by them?

Bol. Yes, sir.

Ran. Surely that is enough to make a man feel that

life is worth living. You recollect, Tom, when I started this establishment twenty-seven years ago I had very little capital, and nothing to look forward to but what I could accomplish by my own unaided efforts. The best piece of work I ever did was in making you manager of the works, and we have plodded along together honestly, earnestly, faithfully, and in the fear of God, until I am now worth a million of dollars; you are well off and have a good interest in the business, and we have around us one thousand faithful employees with contented, happy, families, who all receive wages as good as are paid anywhere in this land. Surely, Tom, when a man can look back over his life and see that as the result of his labors he has no reason to fear that he has lived in vain.

Bol. You certainly have the right to think that way, Mr. Randolph. No employer of labor ever lived who treated his men more fairly, justly, and considerately than you have done, and the proof of it is the fact that to a man they will stand by you and the works in any emergency that may overtake us.

(Enter MR. RANDOLPH'S DAUGHTER, CELESTE, *a young lady of* 22, *who goes up to her father and kisses him.*

Celeste. Oh, papa, I have just heard such an awful thing.

Ran. What is it, my dear?

Cel. You know Mrs. Ingham, the lady who raised those dear little bantam chickens for me?

Ran. Her husband is one of the men in the works, is he not?

Cel. Yes, sir. Well, you know her sister's husband was a brakeman on the Taunton and Eastern Railway. They had a frightful accident on that road the other day and this brakeman was killed, and poor Mrs. Ingham's sister, Mrs. Thompson, is left with four little children and not one dollar to support them with. She has moved into Mrs. Ingham's house with her little children and all of them must be supported by Mr. Ingham, or starve.

Ran. Dear me, that is a wretched piece of business. Do you know anything about it, Tom?

Bol. Yes, sir. I know all about it. You see, the railroad is a single track road. The freight train that Thompson was braking on had orders to stop at a way station, to allow two other freight trains coming towards

it to pass, and it pulled out on the side track. That road brags on the dividends it pays its stockholders, but it earns them by working its men to death. The conductor of Thompson's train had been up all night, and while the train was standing there he fell asleep. Just as the first one of the approaching trains passed him he woke up and got it into his head that it was the second one of them. He signalled the engineer to get back on the main track and go ahead, which the engineer, ignorant of the situation, did at once, and in five minutes he met the second train head on, and was killed himself and Thompson was also killed.

Ran. And this poor woman, Mrs. Thompson, and her four little children are now entirely destitute?

Bol. They are, sir.

Ran. Well, her husband was killed through criminal negligence, and I will see that that railroad pays her proper damages for killing him. My dear, go and tell the butler to phone for Mr. St. George Ashton to come here to see me. (CELESTE *leaves.*) Do you know Mr. Ashton, Tom?

Bol. I do not know him, but I know of him. His reputation is that of the leading younger member of the bar.

Ran. And he deserves it, too, Tom. He came here from the country ten years ago to practice his profession. He had nothing but an excellent education and his own pluck and spotless character. My son had known him at college and was his intimate friend. He introduced him into my family, and I at once saw the metal of which he was made. I gave him such legal business as our establishment had, which though not much was, of course, a boon to him. He has now worked himself up in his profession until he is universally respected and trusted. I shall employ him to sue that railroad for Mrs. Thompson.

Bol. It will be a generous and a charitable act, Mr. Randolph. I don't know what is to become of poor Mrs. Thompson, and her little children, unless she is aided by people like you.

(*Enter servant with a card, which he hands to* MR. RANDOLPH.)

Ran. Show him in.

(*Enter* ST. GEORGE ASHTON.)

Ran. Good morning, Mr. Ashton. I have sent for you

to get you to sue the Taunton and Eastern Railroad for negligently killing a poor brakeman, who has left a widow and four little children with nothing to support them. I will pay your fee and all expenses. The conductor of the train most negligently went to sleep and thereby caused a collision in which the brakeman was killed. So you can institute suit against that road at once, unless it will pay Mrs. Thompson a handsome sum of money.

Ashton. I am sorry, Mr. Randolph, but I cannot bring the suit for you.

Ran. Why Is it possible a man of your pluck and independence can allow himself to be intimidated by that powerful corporation?

Ash. Not at all, sir. But the law will not allow a recovery in such a case.

Ran. What! You tell me that the law allows railroads to murder our fellow citizens and escape all liability for their acts?

Ash. Lamentably, sir; it is only too true. The doctrine of the law is that if an employee of a railroad is injured or killed through the negligence of his fellow employee, he or his wife can recover nothing from the railroad for it, and this man was killed through the negligence of a fellow employee. It is called the doctrine of fellow-servants.

Ran. Sir; what you say is monstrous. I cannot believe that the laws of my country tolerate any such inhuman proposition. Go and bring that suit. I will stand all costs and expenses. But I will never believe that the laws of my country refuse compensation to a poor woman like this until it is so officially declared. Go and demand a settlement from this railroad and, if it will not make one, sue them.

Ash. I will do it, Mr. Randoph, to oblige you, but I tell you there is no possibility of recovering anything.

(*Enter* CELESTE.)

Cel. How do you do, Mr. Ashton. What have you got papa so wrought up about?

Ash. He wants me to overthrow the laws of the country and force the Taunton and Eastern Railroad to pay Mrs. Thompson damages for killing her husband when the laws exempt them from all liability for their act. This

is more than I am equal to, but as he is so much in earnest about it I am going to make an effort.

Cel. That is right. I don't believe the laws will refuse redress to a poor woman like Mrs. Thompson. It is inhuman to suggest it.

Ash. Well, my dear Miss Celeste, you know that the poet says, "Man's inhumanity to man, makes countless thousands mourn." I think myself the doctrine of the law is a most unreasonable and harsh one, but you are hardly going to be so tyrannical as to hold me responsible for the law being the law, are you?

Cel. I don't know anything more about tyranny than I know about good government. But I know you ought to make that railroad pay Mrs. Thompson enough to support those little children with, and I expect you to do it. Do you hear that?

Ash. Miss Celeste, if you should direct me to dive to the bottom of the ocean in search of a pearl you had heard was there, or if you should call on me to climb the highest snowclad peak of the Andes to catch for you that famous red bird that has its habitat there, I should make the attempt.

Cel. I don't believe you would be so foolish as to attempt either thing.

Ash. Nobody knows what a man will attempt when a beautiful and fascinating woman makes a request.

Cel. Pshaw, don't talk nonsense. Look here papa, why can't I do something towards helping Mrs. Thompson. Suppose I have a fair, what they call a *fete champetre* on our lawn to raise some money for her. I believe I could raise her quite a little sum.

Ran. I see no reason for objecting to it.

Cel. Very well. I'll make all the arrangements and have a fair next Saturday evening. Mr. Ashton, you must give me all the aid in your power .

Ash. You may count on me, and I think I shall be much more effective than in our proposed law suit. Adieu, till then.

(*Exunt.*)

(*Curtain goes down.*)

ACT II.

SCENE I—Mr. Randolph's *lawn. Tables with lemonade, ice cream, cake, etcl, on them. Persons moving about.*

just before the curtain rises the orchestra, behind the curtain strikes up S'alve Demora, from Gounod's Faust; as it is concluded the curtain rises. CELESTE *and* ASHTON *standing in the front in conversation.*

Ashton. And this is your fete champetre, is it?

Celeste. It is. I hope it does not offend your refined sensibilities.

Ash. By no means. Upon the contrary I rather approve of it.

Cel. Thank you; you are very kind.

Ash. Don't speak of it. By the way, was that beautiful selection of Salve Demora from Gounod's Faust, the orchestra was playing a moment ago, made by you?

Cel. Oh, dear, no, I don't know enough about music to make selections from the operas. How came you to know so much about it

Ash. I have what they call an "ear for music," and I am passionately fond of it.

Cel. What do people mean when they talk of an "ear for music?"

Ash. Well, that is the capacity for appreciating music, and telling good music from bad music. The ability to judge of music turns on the degree with which nature has endowed one with a "ear for music." If you have a good "ear for music," you will be delighted with good music. If you have a poor "ear for music" you will think you enjoy good music, but you won't, because you will be unable to tell good music from bad when you hear it.

Cel. Then, you set up to be a connoiseur in music, sir?

Ash. Not at all, and it is a mean thing in you to say so. You asked me how I came to know about music, and I told you I had an "ear for music." I could not deny nature's gift, could I?

Cel. Well, I have heard people say that you were a connoisseur, and I was merely trying to find out what you thought about it. You have spoken of Gounod's Faust. What do you think of it and of French music, generally?

Ash. The French have but one musician, Gounod, and he has written but one thing that I care to hear, Faust. But strange as Faust is, I can listen to it with delight all the time. The music is absolutely unique, and in some sort, not music at all. But it is a combination of sweet sounds that is very delicious to me.

Cel. Well, Mr. Connoisseur, since you think so poorly

of French music, perhaps you think better of Italian music?

Ash. But little better than the French. When one who really appreciates music and asks for it and is given Italian or French music, it is like giving a hungry man molasses and water when he craves beef steak.

Cel. Then, pray tell me, sir, what composer you are willing to listen to

Ash. There is but one composer.

Cel. And who may he be?

Ash. Why, Wagner, of course. It's like the famous horse race won by Eclipse. "Eclipse first, the others nowhere." If you want to hear a piece of music, call to the leader of your orchestra to play the song to the Evening Star in Tannhauser.

(CELESTE *calls to the leader of the orchestra to play the song to the Evening Star. The orchestra plays it.*)

Cel. That is very beautiful, indeed.

Ash. Aha. There is hope for you, then. If you appreciate that which is one of the most exquisite pieces of music ever composed, it shows that you have a rudimentary ear at least. Something might be made of you by cultivation, yet.

Cel. Thank you, sir; you are very kind and condescending.

Ash. A mere trifle. Don't give it another thought. Let me point this out to you, however. The difference between Wagner's music and the music of all other composers is one of kind and not of degree. No other writer composes music of the same sort, and when your ear has once become familiar with Wagner's music you do not wish to hear the music of any other composer. You can listen to Wagner's music all the time, but you cannot tolerate any other music.

Cel. Well, Mr. Connoisseur, I must tender you my very sincere thanks for your essay on music, which is entertaining if it has no other value. Are you as ready with criticisms on poetry as you are on music?

Ash. I have my favorite poet.

Cel. And who is he?

Ash. Shakespeare, of course. Another case of Eclipse first, the others nowhere.

Cel. Do you call a man who never writes in rhyme a poet?

Ash. Perhaps, my answer should be that I do not see how a man who writes in rhyme can be a poet. Take that

exquisite picture from the Tempest: "The cloud capped towers, the solemn temples, the gorgeous palaces, the great globe itself, yea, all that it inherit shall dissolve; and like this unsubstantial pageant faded leave not a rack behind." Put your greatest word-master now to turning that into rhyme, and what a scarecrow he would make of it. Thomas Carlyle had the most poetic mind that any English speaking man since Shakespeare has had, and yet he could not write decent rhyme, and he scorned to write any. Poetry is in the thought, the imagination and not in the jingle.

Cel. Won't you admit that Tennyson is a poet?

Ash. He has written some very beautiful lines.

Cel. Quote me some that you think beautiful.

Ash. In all the range of literature there is nothing more beautiful than the lines—

"Dear as remembered kisses after death.
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
On lips that are for others."

Cel. (*abstractedly*) They are very touching; but why do you dwell so tenderly on kisses imagined for lips that are for others?

Ash. Because I fear that the lips I want to impress my kisses on will never allow me to imprint them there.

Cel. Do you remember when Sir Walter Raleigh scrawled on the pane of glass with the diamond:

"I fain would climb, but fear to fall."

Queen Elizabeth scrawled under it—

"If thy heart fails, then climb not at all."

There might be a lesson for you in that.

Ash. No, no; the girl I love will never requite my affection.

Cel. You don't know; keep after her; you know the old saying: "Faint heart never won fair lady." Nothing could be truer, and the converse is almost as true, that persistence is very apt to win her.

Ash. No; she don't appreciate me, and will never love me.

Cel. Let me suggest to you some of the perversities of a woman's nature. Lord Bacon says in his essay on love

that "it is a true rule that love is ever rewarded either with the reciproque or with an inward and secret contempt." This is entirely true. When a man addresses a woman he prostrates himself before her and that inevitably rouses in her mind, if she does not return his love a sort of contempt for him. But this, nevertheless, is true; no woman ever yet failed to feel a different interest in a man after he has addressd her, from what she felt in him before. Now, if she rejects him and the man will pursue her, declaring his love continuously and at every opportunity, and if he piques her and keeps her piqued, he will win her as surely as the sun rises and sets. When he has once piqued her all he has to do to catch her is to be indifferent to her. She can't stand indifference from the man who has piqued her.

Ash. But how can I show indifference to the woman I love? I can easily declare my love at every favorable opportunity, but I must be always showing myself to be her slave?

Cel. Then you will never win her. Though she will never admit it, yet every woman in her secret heart longs for a master. A kind and gentle one, it is true, but a master, nevertheless. If she thinks she is stronger than you, you will never win her love. But if your wills conflict and yours predominates, she falls before you. Keep these suggestions before your mind and you may yet win your sweetheart.

Ash. I don't think much of your philosophy, and though you are a woman you have much to learn of woman's nature. A woman is won by devotion to her. That is what she yields to.

Cel. All right, my friend, some of these days you will learn that I have looked beneath the surface at the real state of affairs. But the company is leaving, and it is time we were going into the house.

(*Exunt.*)

ACT II.

SCENE 2—RANDOLPH'S *workmen's village. A number of his workmen, their wives and children, all in their holiday clothes.* MRS. THOMPSON *and her four little children.* MR. RANDOLPH, CELESTE *and* ASHTON, *a committee of workmen to wait on* MR. RANDOLPH.

Celeste to Mrs. Thompson. Mrs. Thompson, my fete

champtre netted you $500.00. I gave the money to papa and he has given me his check for $500.00 payable to your order, which he now presents to you. I hope it will give you substantial aid in taking care of your four little ones.

Mrs. Thompson. God bless you, Miss Celeste; you are an angel. This money will enable me to take good care of my children. I shall open a small millinery store here in the village with it. The families of all the men will patronize me, and from the proceeds I will be able to live comfortably.

Cel. And I shall patronize you, too.

Mrs. Thomp. Oh, Miss Celeste, a fine lady like you would not wear such things as I shall keep.

Cel. You don't know me; I will wear whatever will help to take care of those poor little children.

Mrs. Thomp. I say again, Miss Celeste, you are an angel. (*Aside to* Ashton) If you get her it will be the best day's work you ever did.

Ash. (*aside to* Mrs. Thomp.) Get her, how can I ever get her?

(Balkans, *spokesman of the workman's committee, addresses* Randolph.)

Balkans. Mr. Randolph, knowing that this meeting was to take place this evening, your workmen had a meeting last evening to take under consideration the relations existing between you and them, and to pass resolutions expressive of their sense of the manner in which you have always treated them. I was made chairman of a committee appointed to present resolutions passed at that meeting, and I have them here now to present to you. Instead of reading them at large I will state to you briefly what they express. They say that you have always treated your men with the greatest kindness and consideration, that you have always paid wages equal to the best that are paid anywhere; that if any man has a cause of complaint of any sort whatever, he knows he can come and state it to you fully and freely, and that it will be thoroughly investigated and that absolute justice will be done, that you treat your men more as a parent than as an exacting employer and that the men, deeply sensible of the just, fair and liberal manner in which you have always treated them will stand by you if any necessity for such action should arise, to the last extremity.

(*Hands* Randolph *the resolutions.*)

Randolph, Mr. Balkans, it is needless for me to say that

I am touched by this expression of the confidence my men have in me. I have always tried to treat them justly, fairly and kindly, and it is a source of inexpressible gratification to me to know that they appreciate the feeling with which I have always dealt with them, and I can say that no employer of labor has ever received from his men more gratifying recognition of well meant attention to their wants than I have had; no man could have a better set of workmen than mine. By the way, do the men belong to the labor unions?

Balk. We do not belong to the regular labor unions, but we have a labor union of our own, to which all of the men belong. We took the matter under grave and serious consideration, and as a result of it we determined that we would have our own union.

Ran. What was there in the regular labor unions that you objected to?

Balk. We objected to the principle of coercion upon which they are all founded. We do not believe that coercion and physical violence are the proper methods of securing recognition of rights.

Ran. You are right; coercion is opposed to every principle of development and evolution. It is the use of the strong hand. It is a manifestation of the old saw that—"They shall take who have the power, and they shall keep who can." Human life and human institutions cannot grow and develop upon any such plan. No man will submit to being forced to do anything. Argument and persuasion are the only methods by which useful results can be arrived at.

Balk. That is the conclusion we reached, sir, and we consequently determined to have our own labor union, which wholly discards from our theory of action the principle of coercion.

Ran. And you were wise to do it. Let me call your attention to one of the most signal instances in history of how men resent the idea of being forced to do anything. The resistance made by the people of the South during our great civil war, to the efforts of the United States Government, exceeds in desperate tenacity any struggle ever made by a whole people. That struggle was not for secession, slavery, or a desire for a new and separate republic. The people of the South got it into their heads that the North proposed to compel them, against their will to come back into the Union, and it was the spirit of

resentment to coercion that welded them together as one man, to resist and fight until they were simply exhausted. That is what coercion always produces.

Balk. We understand that, sir, and that is why we have deliberately discarded the principle of coercion from our scheme of organization.

Ran. Well, gentlemen I am glad to have had this meeting with you. Come, Celeste, it is time we were going. Adieu.

Cel. Mr. Ashton, walk home with us?

Ash. With pleasure, for a few moments tete-a-tete.

(*Exunt.*)

ACT II.

SCENE 3—Mr. Randolph's *parlor.* Celeste *and* Ashton *enter.*

Celeste. It was inexpressibly gratifying to me to hand poor Mrs. Thompson that money, and to think I had been useful in providing means for taking care of those little children.

Ashton. Mrs. Thompson was right in telling you, you were an angel. How is it possible such a fascinating creature as you are, could have gone twentytwo years without being caught up and married by some fascinating man?

Cel. Because the right one has never yet appeared.

Ash. And what sort of a one will the right one be?

Cel. Oh, I have a a corner way back in the recesses of my heart, where he sits enthroned, and I fall down before him every day and worship him.

Ash. What is he like;

,Cel. My hero

Ash. Do you recollect those beautiful lines:

She is standing somewhere, she, I shall honor,
She that I wait for, my queen, my queen,
Whether her hair be golden or raven,
Whether her eyes be hazel or blue,
I know not how, twill be engraven
Some day hence, as my favorite hue.

She may be proud or humble, my lady,
Or that sweet calm which is just between
But whenever she comes she will find me ready
To do her honor, my queen, my queen."

Can you put the word king in place of queen, and repeat the verses as expressing your feelings in the matter?

Cel. Oh, how beautiful those verses are. Where did you meet with them? Yes, I can put king where queen now stands, and repeat every line as pouring out my heart's inmost yearnings.

Ash. Do you believe that marriages are based generally upon affection?

Cel. Yes, I do. I believe that ninety-nine marriages out of every hundred are heart to heart marriages.

Ash. You know Sheridan makes Mrs. Malaprop say that it is a small matter whether marriage begins with affection or aversion, and as either one always wears off, it's safest to begin with a little aversion. What do you think of that?

Cel. I think it is a cynical falsehood, and Sheridan knew better than to have written it. Take the cases of domestic infelicity, what a trifling per cent. of them as compared with the whole. When a divorce case arises we hear a great noise about it, but nothing is said of the thousands of happy homes. It is illustrated by that beautiful saying of Thomas Carlyle, "the crashing fall of the monarch of the forest is heard by many ears, whilst an unnoticed breeze may plant a thousand acorns."

Ash. Celeste, I'll die if I don't declare my love to you. I have loved you ever since you were a girl in short dresses. I have struggled against it, while I was a poor young man, unable to support a wife, but I could never conquer it. It had me gripped in a vise from which I have never been able to free myself. Now that I am prosperous and able to take care of a wife, I can no longer restrain myself. Celeste, don't you care something for me?

Cel. No, Mr. Ashton, I do not; I have the highest respect and regard for you, but I do not love you.

Ash. Celeste if I were offered the choice between the wealth of all the Rosthchilds and Rockefeller's combined, without you on the one hand, and grinding poverty with you on the other, I would spurn their wealth and eagerly take you and poverty. Don't you think that in time you could come to care for me a little?

Cel. No, Mr. Ashton, I can never love you.

Ash. Is there some other man in the case? Do you care for some one else?

Cel. No; I am absolutely "heart whole and fancy free." I care for no one.

Ash. Then, how can you know that you will never care for me?

Cel. I know it perfectly well. I respect you too much to ever love you.

Ash. Do you mean to say that your love will be given to a man you do not respect?

Cel. Oh, no; but when you have been raised up with a man, whom you have always been taught to look on as a model, there is not much probability that you will love him that way.

Ash. But let me continue to hope that I may win you after awhile.

Cel. It is useless, Mr. Ashton. I think too highly of you to hold out false encouragements to you. I can never love you, so get me out of your heart and mind.

Ash. Well, if it must be so, it must be. Farewell. I will struggle against my fate with all the resolution I possess.

(*Exit.*)

ACT II.

SCENE 4—CELESTE RANDOLPH'S *sitting room.* CELESTE *and her maid* SARAH.

Celeste. Sarah, have you noticed that Mr. Ashton never comes here now?

Sarah. Oh, yes, Miss; I have noticed it.

Cel. You know he has not been here since the evening we went to the works to give Mrs. Thompson that money I made at the fair.

Sarah. Yes, Miss, I know, and that has been more than three months ago.

Cel. Isn't it strange he should have stopped coming here so suddenly, when he used to come almost every day. What do you think can have been the cause of it?

Sarah. I have no idea, Miss, but I expect you know the cause.

Cel. Oh, Sarah, how foolish. How could I know the cause?

Sarah. Well, Miss, when young gentlemen stop coming to see young ladies they have been desperatively attentive to the young ladies are very likely to know why.

Cel. Sarah, that is absurd; young gentlemen are governed by their humors and young ladies can't be expected to know what humors govern them.

Sarah. All the same, I expect you know more about Mr. Ashton's humor in this case than anybody else. By the way, Miss, have you heard how he is carrying on?

Cel. What, Sarah; what do you mean by his carrying on?

Sarah. Well, Tom Jones who married my sister, is the janitor of the building in which Mr. Ashton has his offices, and he is devoted to Mr. Ashton. He tells us that Mr. Ashton has become an utterly different man from what he used to be.

Cel. In what respect, Sarah?

Sarah. Why, he used to be the steadiest man in town, doing nothing but attending to his business. Of late, he neglects his business and is on a constant spree.

Cel. Oh Sarah, you don't tell me so; what a pity, what a pity.

Sarah. Such a fine young gentleman. It is a pity.

Cel. Does Tom say he sprees much?

Sarah. Yes, indeed, maam. He is on a spree all the time.

Cel. Fie, fie, that is too bad. Surely, Sarah, he doesn't get drunk and make an exhibition of himself?

Sarah. Well, I haven't heard of his being picked up in the streets. It is not so much a case of over drinking as it is of carousing and neglecting his business. Something seems to have taken possession of him that has changed his whole nature. From being one of the steadiest men in the world, he has become a trifler and an idler.

Cel. Dear me, it is too bad. Do you hear whether he goes much into society, Sarah?

Sarah. I hear he frequently goes to see Miss Pinkney.

Cel. What, that red headed girl that lives up on Fourth Avenue??

Sarah. That is the one.

Cel. And Tom tells you he goes frequently to see her?

Sarah. Yes, Miss.

Cel. Why, Sarah, that is not a pretty girl, and she certainly is a very bad mannered one. No later than yesterday she snubbed me in Morrison's dry goods store.

Sarah. I expect she has heard that Mr. Ashton is an old beau of yours.

Cel. But, Sarah, he is not. He used to come here very often, but no one had the right to call him a beau of mine.

Sarah. Well, people will put a gentleman down as a young lady's beau, when he goes to see her six times a

week, and then drops in every Sunday evening.

Cel. Pshaw, Sarah, you are incorrigible. Get me my hat and coat, I am going to take a wolk.

(SARAH *goes for hat and coat.*)

Cel. (*to herself*) How strange. Before Mr. Ashton addressed me I never cared anything about him. I care nothing for him now, but ever since I heard he was getting into bad habits, I have felt that maybe I was the cause of it, and oh, me, that would be too bad. Anyhow that hateful Miss Pinkney shan't take him away from me.

(*Exit.*)

ACT II.

SCENE 5—*A street.* CELESTE *and* ASHTON *enter from opposite direction and meet.*

Celeste. How do you do, Mr. Ashton? Its an age since I saw you. Where have you kept yourself?

Ashton. Oh, I have been around and about engaged in a somewhat unusual occupation—attending to my own business.

Cel. Ah! I thought your business was that of attending to the business of other people.

Ash. So it is, in a sense, but I only do that when I am paid for it. I have ceased concerning myself about other people when I can make nothing by it.

Cel. Well, at any rate, your newly adopted cynicism ought not to make you forget old friends.

Ash. I do not find old friends of any more consequence than new ones. Friendship seems to me in the main what the friend can get out of it.

Cel. Oh, Mr. Ashton, how you have changed. How could a few months make such a difference in a person? I never heard you hint at such horrible sentiments before.

Ash. Well, perhaps not. But a few months of moody reflections may teach a man a great deal.

Cel. It should never teach him to give up his old friends.

Ash. Perhaps not. But perhaps also he could make some new friends in the meantime who would suit his purposes just as well. Meantime as I have an engagement with one of those best friends, the man who pays money for my interviews, I must bid you good day.

Cel. Are you sure you are not going to see Miss Pinkney?

Ash. Why, what do you know of Miss Pinkney?

Cel. Well, I know as much as anybody can know of a red headed girl. Why, if you even speak of one a white horse comes in sight. Look at that white horse crossing the street down there.

Ash. Indeed, well, I didn't know that there was any calamity in looking at a white horse.

Cel. No, but it seems to me if I were devoting my self to a young lady, I should hate the idea that she was inseparately connected with a white horse. Suppose that the sight of her always suggested a monkey.

Ash. But the sight of Miss Pinkney is very far from suggesting a monkey. She is a very beautiful girl with very fascinating manners. I find her very charming.

Cel. Oh, yes, that is the way with all of you men, always ready to drop old friends for new ones.

Ash. Well, this is a free country, and there is no law that I know of that requires a man to visit those he does not care to visit, or that prohibits him to visit those he wishes to visit.

Cel. Oh, no; oh, no; you have a perfect right to devote yourself to your new red headed friend and to neglect your old and tried friends if you choose to do so, but in time you will find you have made a mistake.

Ash. Possibly, but I will take chances on it at any rate. Good day.

(*Exit.*)

Cel. (*to herself*) I never saw a man so changed as Mr. Ashton is. He shows evidences of dissipation, and he is utterly cynical and sour. Formerly he had no trace of either. I think it is really mean of him to treat me as he does. I was not responsible for his falling in love with me, and it was all his own fault. But what is to be done. I don't love him, at least I don't love him enough to marry him. I certainly like him a great deal more than I used to but I don't like him enough to marry him. I always had the greatest respect and admiration for him, and now his indifference and harshness, instead of driving me away, seem to draw him nearer to me. Well, well, I shall never put myself in the way of being snubbed by him again as I was to-day.

(*Exit.*)

ACT II.

SCENE 6—Ashton's *apartments. Supper table covered with*

viands and bottles of champagne. ASHTON *and his friends,* BASTROM RENDELEAR *and* RUDOLPH, *sitting at the table drinking wine very freely.*

Ashton. Well, my friends, Bastrom, Rendelear, and Rudolph, what have you to say of me in my new character?

Bastrom. For one I say that you are the most charming companion I ever had, but am very sorry to see you abandoning your old steady ways and getting into bad habits.

Rendelear and Rudolph. Those are our sentiments also, old fellow.

Ash. Bah! Don't talk to me of the drudgery of a lawyer's life. Give me the flowing bowl, boon companions and plenty of music. I'll give you a song from Olivette. (*Sings*)

Where balmy garlic scents the air, for much 'tis eaten by the many,
And where on oranges they fare, as low I'm told as twelve a penny;
Yes, that's the land for which we pray,
Who have to live upon half pay,
We'll dance by starlight on the green,
To merry castanet and tambourine,
Stroll in the vegas,
Flirt in the Bodegas,
Yes, let us go to Andalusia, ho."

(*Dwelling on the high note "ho" he rises from his chair and hops around the room as though holding a guitar in his hands and dragging the right foot after the left.*)

All three. Bravo! Bravo!

Bas. Why, Ashton, you have mistaken your calling, you ought to be in opera.

Ash. Give me time, maybe I'll get there yet.

Ren. How did you get this turn for music, that you are always showing?

Ash. Well, my mother was a most accomplished musician, and she had me taught to play on the violin when I was a boy. I became passionately devoted to it and have remained so ever since. When I was about nineteen, there was a riot in the city where I lived, growing out of a labor strike and I joined with the police in endeavoring to quell it. In the melee that followed some fellow shot a pistol ball through my left hand breaking the bones of

the third and little fingers, and this made them stiff, and I could no longer get them upon the finger board of the violin. Possibly another Ole Bull was lost to mankind by that unlucky pistol shot.

Bas. Do you find yourself much the looser by it?

Ash. There is never a moment that I do not regret my inability to play on my dear old violin. I fondle it as a young mother does her first born. There is never a moment when some favorite piece of music is not running through my mind. Sometimes when deep in Fearne on Contingent Remainders, or any other absorbing work, I wake up from my meditations and become conscious that the whole orchestration of the overture to Tannhauser is crashing through my mind.

Bass. Well, my boy, what has happened to turn the dignified and sedate Ashton, into the romping, carousing, all around good fellow that you have become?

Ash. *Taisez vous.* That is another story.

Bas. But the world is saying it is disappointment in love.

Ash. You tell the world from me to mind its own business; to let my affairs alone.

Bas. Yes, but the world will go on wagging its tongue just the same.

Ash. I'll tell you what you tell the world. You tell the world I am trying to find out how old man Sam Tilden came to make that colossal blunder in writing his will, and that I am experimenting with champagne to see how far it might have entered into the case.

Bas. I'll tell the word no such lie. But, really, Ashton, you ought to stop this foolishness and get back to work.

Ash. Well, I'm going to reform in a short time. Indeed, I have got to get into shape before long. Randolph employed me in a case that requires me to overthrow the fellow servant doctrine, and its coming on for trial after awhile; you will admit that I shall need all that's in me to accomplish that event.

Bas. Well, rather. But by the way, are you fellows invited to Miss Pinkney's soiree next Wednesday evening?

All three. We are.

Bas. We'll all meet there and have a good time. Meanwhile, its time for this carousal to come to an end; so let's break up. Adieu, Ashton, you have given us a very pleasant evening.

(*Exunt.*)

ACT II.

SCENE 7—Miss PINKNEY'S *drawing room. Couples of ladies and gentlemen standing around engaged in conversation.* ASHTON *and* MISS PINKNEY *standing together at the front of the stage.* BASTROM *and* CELESTE RANDOLPH *standing together on the other side.*

Miss Pinkney. Mr. Ashton, I am so glad you came tonight. I have heard that you have not been very well recently, and I was afraid you would not be able to come.

Ashton. My health has not been very good of late, but you know I would brave every peril to comply with your wishes.

Bastrom. (*aside*) A lie; and he knows it. There has been nothing the matter with him but headaches and nervousness from late hours and too much champagne.

Miss Pink. That was very nicely said, and now if you are so anxious to comply with my wishes, I want you to be particularly nice to Miss Celeste Randolph this evening.

Ash. Why do you wish me to be particularly polite to Miss Randolph?

Miss Pink. Never mind what are my reasons. However this one is enough for you. I have heard that she said I have not been polite to her of late. I want to show her by making the nicest man here attentive to her this evening, that she is very much mistaken.

Ash. I doubt if she will feel very grateful to you to think that the attentions she receives are due to your sending gentlemen to wait on her.

Miss Pink. Oh, but then you are naturally so glad of an opportunity to be with her.

Ash. Why do you think that? I have not seen her in several months.

Miss Pink. Yes; but I have noticed when you did not think I was noticing, that you have seen her a good deal this evening.

Ash. Why, I have not spoken to her and have scarcely even looked at her.

Miss Pink. Oh, what a fib; you have hardly ever taken your eyes off of her since she came in the room.

Ash. You ladies are so observant, that you wholly overdo the matter. But come, I see the orchestra is about starting up. Let's dance.

(*The orchestra plays the waltz from Faust. Every one dances.*)

Cel. Mr. Bastrom, you are a great friend of Mr. Ashton, are you not?

Bas. Oh, yes, indeed. Ashton and I have been intimate and devoted friends ever since we were boys.

Cel. He is a very charming man, and I am not surprised you should be very fond of him; but what is the meaning of these stories I hear of his becoming dissipated?

Bas. It is one of the most surprising things I ever knew of; until four or five months back, he was one of the steadiest fellows I ever knew, caring for nothing apparently but his profession, but recently he neglects his business doing many things he should not do, and leaving undone many things he should do.

Cel. It's too bad that such a splendid fellow should take to such bad courses. But have you noticed he has not spoken to me this whole evening. He used to be one of my best friends. But now I never see anything of him.

Bas. Now, you have hit the nail on the head. I suspect you know more of this change in him than any one else.

Cel. Oh, Mr. Bastrom, what do you mean?

Bas. Why, a guilty conscience needs no accuser, and I can't help thinking you can give more information in this matter than anyone else, except Ashton himself.

Cel. Pshaw, Mr. Bastrom, you talk nonsense.

(MISS PINKNEY *moves over to* CELESTE.)

Miss Pinkney. Oh, Miss Randolph, you are looking your best this evening. That lovely ruby in your hair contrasts beautifully with the dark shades.

Cel. Thank you, so much. That ruby was a birthday present to me two years ago from Mr. Ashton. You know his taste runs to red.

Miss Pink. I did not know it. I thought he liked the dark and sombre.

Cel. Well, I believe his taste varies. When he is himself, he is very serious, with no tendency towards the frivolous, and then he likes dark colors. But I believe he sometimes becomes erratic, and then I think bright colors attract him. You must not conclude that his present partiality for red is permanent.

Miss Pink. Really, Miss Randolph, his permanent or temporary partialities are a matter of no moment to me. But as I see he is quite alone, I will excuse myself to see that he is not neglected.

(*Moves off.*)

Bas. Pretty pointed talk, that.

Cel. She made it a point to be rude to me in Morrison's dry goods store the other day, and I made up my mind to get even with her at the first opportunity.

Bas. Well, I think you evened up matters between you pretty thoroughly that time. I don't think there is much coming to you. But look there she is bringing that odious little monster, Hogbloom, son of the president of the trust, up to introduce him to you. If you don't look out you will be a member of the Hogbloom family before you know it.

Cel. Oh, mercy. Heaven forbid.

(MISS PINKNEY *brings up young* MR. HOGBLOOM.)

Miss Pink. Miss Randolph, allow me to present you to Mr. Hogbloom. His father is so well known to everybody that Mr. Hogbloom hardly needs an introduction to any one.

Young Hogbloom. Well, my father is pretty well known in this community, I believe; indeed, he is so well known that I feel as though I might go up and speak to most people without the formality of an introduction.

Cel. Did it ever occur to you that those knowing your father so well, might on that account demur to making his son's acquaintance?

Young Hog. Well, I must admit that that view of the case never presented itself to my mind; and especially because I can't help thinking my father a very popular man. You can't imagine the number of people that come to see him, and I must say they all treat him with very great respect.

Cel. Perhaps it might be a very disastrous thing for them if they did not.

Young Hog. I can't think so; my father is an exceedingly kind hearted man, who would not hurt any one.

Cel. Perhaps not; and yet he might direct the power of the trust very destructively against a rival in business.

Young Hog. Oh, well; I don't allow my mind to dwell upon topics of that sort. But they are all about to leave, and I would like before they go to ask your permission to call at your house and pay my respects.

Cel. Why, Mr. Hogbloom, our house is open to everybody in society. If you care to call we shall be very glad to see you.

(*Exunt.*)

ACT II.

SCENE 8—*A State court room,* JUDGE HARRISON *on the bench. A jury table, with* ASHTON *and* WALLACE, *counsel for defendant, sitting at it.* MRS. THOMPSON *and her four little children, all in deep mourning, sitting next to* ASHTON. MR. ASHTON *for plaintiff and* MR. WALLACE *for defendant.*

Judge Harrison. Well, gentlemen, the case of *Thompson's Admr.* v. *Taunton and Eastern R. R. Co.,* is set for trial this morning; are you ready?

Ashton. I am ready for the plaintiff, sir.

Wallace. I am ready for the defendant.

Judge. Swear the jury, Mr. Sheriff.

(*Sheriff swears the jury.*)

Ash. Gentlemen of the jury, this is an action against this railroad for negligently killing the husband of this lady who was a brakeman on said railroad. You will hear the evidence and give your verdict in the case. Call the conductor of the train.

(*Conductor takes the witness chair.*)

Ash. You were the conductor on the train when the brakeman THOMPSON was killed, were you not?

Conductor. I was.

Ash. Well, tell the jury all about how it occurred.

Cond. I had orders when I got to Ashwell Station, to take the siding and wait there until No. 45 freight, which was running in two sections, passed, when I was to go back on the main track and go on west. I had been up all night and was overcome by fatigue and loss of rest. I sat down by the side of the train and involuntarily fell asleep. A passing train aroused me and I got it into my head that it was the second section of No. 45, whereas it was in fact the first section. The engine and train hands did not know my orders. I signalled to the engineer to get on the main track and go ahead, which he did, and in five minutes he met the second section coming at full speed, head on, and the engineer and brakeman Thompson were killed.

Ash. That is our case, sir.

Wallace. I don't care to cross examine the witness, and have no witness to offer. We admit those to be facts.

Ash. I move, your honor, to instruct the jury to find a verdict for a sum, the interest on which will support Mrs. Thompson and her four children.

Wal. And I move, your honor, to refuse to give any such instruction. This man was killed through negligence, it is true, but it was the negligence of his fellow servant, the conductor, and the law allows no recovery in that case. I move, your honor, to direct a verdict for the defendant.

Ash. The law which the gentleman claims the protection of, is old, obsolete, and abandoned. It was once the law, but it is no longer the law. It has run out along with the times that gave it birth. That was made the law when there were privileged classes that were given favors and protection by the law, which the masses did not have Accordingly when a privileged person hired several poor laborers he got it adopted as the law that if one of them was injured through the negligence of another he, the lord, was not to be held responsible, because the party was injured through the negligence of a fellow servant, although that fellow servant was his own agent. It was one of the attendants of privileges and caste. But thank God, the day of privilege is over now, and all men stand upon the footing of equality before the law, and this odious attendant of privilege should go with the privilege to which it was incident. Sir, the French Revolution was the great event in the history of mankind after the advent of our Lord and Saviour. Its message to mankind was liberty, equality, and the charity which our Lord and Saviour preached. It found the poor people followed by the prying eye of the lord when they took their cattle to the butcher or their meal to the oven. The poor man could not cross a river without paying the lord a toll; nor take the produce he had raised to market without paying the lord for leave to do so; nor consume what remained of his grain till he had sent it to the lord's mill to be ground; nor sharpen his tools at his own grindstone; nor full his clothes on his own works; nor make wine, oil, or cider at his own still without paying the lord for the privilege. He could not marry off his own daughter until she had spent a night at the castle. When gathering acorns in the fall for his winter's supply of food, he was liable to be sprinkled with shot by the lord for interrupting the course of the hunted stag. That furious upheaval of society which we call the French Revolution, was the protest and rebellion of mankind against this hated and hateful order of things, and the message which the Revolution

sent out to the world, was that such hings should exist no more. Sir, in traveling through France I have come to public buildings erected before the year 1800, and there covered with lichen and moss, and scarcely legible, I have made out, graven deep upon imperishable granite, those magic words, Liberte, Egalite, et Fraternite, the message of the Revolution to mankind, placed there by those stern men who had declared that tyranny should end, and I have taken off my hat to those words as the greatest sermon that has ever been preached on this earth, since that divine one on the mount. That sermon meant the ending of privilege and the equality of all men before the law, and from that day the laws of all civilized people have been struggling to fashion themselves into harmony with those words. Are we in this enlightened country and in this enlightened day to hold on to the tenets of the old order of things and allow incorporated wealth to enjoy the privileges of the feudal lords at the expense of the great mass of the people. I appeal to your honor to put your foot upon this old and obsolete doctrine and force this wealthy corporation to make amends for the negligence of its servants, which deprived these little children of the means of getting bread.

Judge Harrison. Gentlemen of the jury, the law is, that if an employe is injured by the negligence of his fellow servant he can make no recovery from his employer. I direct you, therefore, to find a verdict for the defendant.

Mrs. Thompson. Do I get nothing, then?

Ash. The Judge rules that you can recover nothing.

Mrs. Thomp. (*weeping*) How am I to take care of these little ones, then? Their father was a devoted father and an industrious man, and he provided them with a good support. This rich railroad company has murdered him, and is it not to be made to help me take care of the little ones?

Ash. My dear, madame, it is very pitiable, but it is the law.

(*Exunt.*)

ACT. II.

SCENE 9—*Office of the Executive Committee of the American Turnover Company. Present*: Mr Hogbloom, *Presi-*

dent of the Company, and MESSRS. SWINEHURST *and* BLOATBOND, *Directors; the three constituting the Executive Committee.*

Hogbloom (entering). Good morning gentlemen, we three, I the president, and you two directors, constitue the Executive Committee of the American Turnover Company, which under our management, we can confidently claim to be the most successful trust in the United States, and that is saying a great deal, gentlemen, for the greatness of a country depends upon its rich men, who furnish the capital for all new enterprises, and the trust is the thing to make rich men.

Swinehurst. Every word you say is true. This senseless clamor against the trusts ought to be suppressed by the strong arm of the law. It is suicidal.

Hog. Well, gentlemen, as you know we are met together this morning to go over the affairs of our company. We have all of the United States divided into three districts. You, Mr. Swinehurst have charge of district No. 1; you, Mr. Bloatbond, of district No. 2; and I have charge of district No. 3. What have you to report, Mr. Swinehurst, from district No. 1?

Swine. Nothing of importance, sir; our affairs are in the best possible shape in district No. 1. The factories are all full of orders and we have crushed out all opposition to us in the district. We have an absolute monopoly in all of my territory. When the next dividend is declared the contribution of district No. 1 will be something to be proud of.

Hog. That's good; and what have you to report, Mr. Bloatbond?

Bloatbond. I can report the same thing for district No. 2. All opposition is crushed out in No. 2, and our monopoly there is complete.

Hog. Well, gentlemen, I am sorry to say that my report from district No. 3 is not quite so good as yours. That infernal fellow Randolph has kept his establishment going in opposition to us, and our revenues are somewhat cut down there by reason of it. We have no other opposition in the district, but his opposition tells upon our net revenues. It seems to me the entire power of the trust should be turned upon him until we crush him out.

Swine.

Bloat. We entirely agree with you.

Hog. Then I will see Randolph and give him fair notice that unless he sells out his establishment to us for stock in our company and on terms that suit us, we will crush him out.

Swine.

Bloat. That's the thing to do.

Bloat. By the way, Mr. Hogbloom, I want to get my mind straightened out about some of the details of our trust. How many workmen were employed by the establishments we consolidated before we formed our trust.

Hog. About 300,000.

Bloat. And how many are employed now?

Hog. About 160,000. This is one of our great economies. We are now doing the work with 160,000 men that 300,000 were once employed to do. We dispensed with 140,000 workmen.

Bloat. And how many salaried officers, clerks, and drummers did the old establishments employ?

Hog. About 20,000.

Bloat. And how many do we employ?

Hog. About 1,000.

Bloat. And how many families who were owners, lived on the old establishments?

Hog. About 1,000

Bloat. And as ten of us own the entire trust, all of what those 1,000 families lived on comes now into the pockets of us ten

Hog. You are not complaining of it, are you?

Bloat. By no means. I was only thinking that it ought to enable us to keep the wolf away from our doors.

Hog. If we live economically it seems to me we ought to be able to live.

Bloat. Let me see. We have one hundred millions of ten per cent. preferred stock, and three hundred millions of common stock. It looks as though we would be able this year to pay the dividend on the preferred and to pay a dividend of twenty per cent. on the common. That will give us some seventy millions of dollars to divide out amongst us ten this year, or about seven millions to each of us. Quite a snug income for us, I must say.

Hog. Well, if we are not extravagant, I think we ought to be able to get along.

Swin. Mr. Hogbloom, what do you think of the clamor made by the public that it is bad policy for the government to permit ten men to monopolize all the revenues

that formerly sustained all these people?

Hog. Perfect nonsense, sir! As a proposition in political economy, it will not bear a moment's examination. You see it turns all that great body of people loose upon the community with little or no means, and under an imperative necessity to scuffle for existence. This sets them all industriously at work, and they create a vast number of new enterprises, which add incalculably to the general wealth. The clamor is perfectly senseless, sir.

Swin. I see. I believe you are right, and if we have deprived this large body of people of what they formerly lived on, we have greatly cheapened the price of commodities.

Hog. Yes, sir. That is a good idea to keep before the dear people. But you know, Swinehurst, that there is a good deal of humbuggery about it. We have undoubtedly cheapened commodities somewhat, but we are not in the elemosynary business. We are in business to make all we can out of it. We bring prices down to the highest point we think the public will stand, and we stop right there. But you know as well as I do that if competition were free it would bring prices far below that. We bring prices down to what we want them to be and then if independent concerns attempt to bring them lower we simply crush out these independent concerns.

Swin. Well, but we need not tell the people that.

Hog. Of course, not. Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise, and if the public fools itself with the notion that the trust cheapens commodities to their lowest point, let it hug its dear delusion while we gather in the shekels.

Well, gentlemen, adieu until our next meeting.

ACT II.

SCENE 10—HOGBLOOM *and* RANDOLPH *meet in the street.*

Hogbloom. Well, Mr. Randolph, how is business?

Randolph, Well, Sir; Competition is pretty lively, but we are able to keep going quite satisfactorily.

Hog. Mr. Randolph, you ought to sell your establishment out to us. If you find competition severe now, it is nothing to what you will find it hereafter. We cannot permit you to continue as a competitor to us.

Ran. Mr. Hogbloom, I am perfectly well aware of the

power of your trust, but I cannot believe that the laws of our country will permit you to set yourselves deliberately to work to crush out my business.

Hog. Well, Mr. Randolph, you had better sell to us than to drive us into crushing you. It will be cheaper to us and far better for you.

Ran. What would be your idea of a proper price for my establishment?

Hog. Well, if we give you $250,000 of our stock for your whole plant, I think we would give you a fair price.

Ran. Why, Mr. Hogbloom, my plant is worth one million of gold dollars, and you talk of giving me only $250,000 of your watered stock. My plant represents a life's work, and it is one of the most complete plants in the world.

Hog. That may be all so, Mr. Randolph, but we must look at it from the standpoint of what it will cost us to crush you. The question with us is which will put the severest drain on our pocket; to pay you $250,000 of our stock or to crush you. That is the only way we can look at it.

Ran. Mr. Hogbloom, you must excuse me, because I am going to use some very plain language to you. I have spent twenty-seven years of my life in building up my plant. These have been twenty-seven years of honest, manly endeavor, in which I have secured the good opinion of all men I have dealt with, and in which I have gathered around me a family of 1,000 workmen who trust me and look up to me in a measure as a father. I will not submit, at the dictation of an overgrown bully, to sacrificing my property and turning my employees over to a heartless corporation, which will treat them as so many pack-mules, to be kicked about from pillar to post and turned out to starve, just as five cents can or cannot be added to its bloated treasury, Sir, the enormous wealth of your trust may enable you to crush me. But in my effort to protect my property and save my men, I shall fight to the last and go down, if I must, with my flag in my hand and my honor unstained. Sir, your threat has all the savagery of a wild beast's appetite. But do your worst, Sir; I defy you. Good day, sir.

(*Exunt.*)

ACT II.

SCENE 11—Mr. Randlph's *office at his works. Enter*

MR. RANDOLPH. *Rings for* TOM BOLLEN. BOLLEN *enters.*

Randolph. I must talk this matter over with Bollen and see what is to be done. Ah, Tom, good morning, my man. Tom, we have stood some terrific strains together, but I'm afraid the worst we have ever encountered is ahead of us now.

Bollen. Why, what's up, Mr. Randolph. There can't be anything much worse than the panic of 1893.

Ran. You think so, Tom? Tom, I'll tell you a story. General Fitz Lee used to illustrate the difference between the Cuban War and our Civil War by the following anecdote: Some fellow came into a company giving the most exaggerated account of the Johnstown flood. An old chap standing up in the corner with his hat pulled down over his eyes would grunt out every now and then, "Oh hell." Presently the fellow asked who is that old chap? A friend replied, it's Noah. The difference between what we met in 1893 and what is before us now, Tom, is about like the difference between the Johnstown flood and Noah's flood

Bol. Why, sir, what can be ahead of us that is so terrible?

Ran. The trust is going to undertake to crush us.

Bol. Whew. That is something to make us stand up and take notice. But why do you think so, Mr. Randolph?

Ran. Hogbloom has just given me notice.

Bol. Well, well. What are you going to do, Mr. Randolph?

Ran. Tom, if you and the men will stand by me I am going to fight to the death.

Bol. You know what I am going to do, Mr. Randolph, and you can count on the last one of the men, too. You have always been fair and square with them, and they are going to back you now to the last drop of their blood.

Ran. Well, Tom, it is going to be a terrific struggle, but I intend to put up the last dollar I have in my effort to save my works and my men. I will not surrender until I am crushed.

Bol. Well, Mr. Randolph, I'll go and talk the matter over with the men and I'll let you know what they think of it.

Ran. I wish you would, Tom.

(TOM *goes out. Enter* ASHTON.)

Ashton. Good morning, Mr. Randolph. I have come to report to you the result of the trial of Mrs. Thompson's case. It turned out just as I told you it would . The judge ruled that Thompson was killed through the negligence of the conductor, who was his fellow servant, and therefore that the railroad company was not responsible for his death.

Ran. Well, such a doctrine is a blot upon our laws. It is simply scandalous. But that matter is ended and over now and I want to consult you, Mr. Ashton, about another most important matter personal to myself.

Ash. All right, sir. I'll give you the best advice that I know how to give.

Ran. Hogbloom, president of the trust, has been to me and demanded that I sell my plant to them for $250,000 of their common stock. The proposition is absurd. My plant is worth a million of gold dollars, and I at once rejected his offer. He then notified me that they would crush me. Now, you know their crushing methods, I suppose. They go to all my customers and offer goods below cost. Their competitor has, of course, to meet this reduction of price, and the contest becomes simply a question of which one has the longest purse. They have got a thousand dollars where I have got one and in such a contest, I will, of course, have, ultimately to go to the wall. What I want to know of you is cannot I invoke the protection of the law in such an unequal contest?

Ash. Mr. Randolph, you ask me one of the most difficult questions that a lawyer can be called upon to answer. In my opinion the principles of our laws protect you, but it is by no means certain that you can get a court to make that ruling.

Ran. Why, how is that?

Ash. You see doctors differ: I think the principles of our laws protect you. But the judge you happen to go before may think differently.

Ran. Can't you give me some sort of idea of the nature of the questions involved?

Ash. Without the slightest difficulty. We inherited the principles of our laws from England. A case was decided there two hundred years ago which, in my judgment, announced principles that control your case. A man had a water front and shot ducks at a decoy for a living. His

neighbor hated him and walked up and down on his own water front firing a gun to scare the ducks away. The man sued him for damages and recovered them. The court held that if the second man had occasion to fire his gun and the ducks were frightened off thereby, the first man had nothing to complain of. But if the second man had no occasion to shoot and shot merely to gratify a malicious feeling towards the first one, that was a wrong for which he must pay damages.

Ran. The idea, then, is that Hogbloom's business does not call upon him to give his goods away to crush me and that he only does it to gratify what is in law a malicious disposition towards me.

Ash. That is it exactly. When he sells his goods above cost, although very little above cost, he is doing business, and if that completely ruins you, you must put up with it. But when he gives his goods away, which, selling them below cost, is, in effect, *pro tanto*, he is not doing business. He is simply trying to destroy you. He is doing exactly what the man did who fired the gun.

Ran. Do you mean to say a merchant cannot have bargain counters, or give his goods away as an advertisement?

Ash. By no means. It all turns on the purpose and intention. If he has a bargain counter in good faith to get rid of old stock, he may have it. If he gives his goods away in good faith to advertise his other goods, he may do that. But that is altogether a different affair from deliberately giving goods away in large quantities for the purpose of destroying you, his competitor.

Ran. Ah! I see, I see.

Ash. These propositions are not war upon business or rich men. We want to see business as active as possible, and a country is all the greater and stronger for its rich men. In this day of electricity and steam there must be combinations of capital and great combinations of capital lso. All that is asked is that rich men and corporations be required to confine themselves to business and abandon piracy, conducted under the name of business. And, when they do this, they must get just as rich as possible, and it is all the better for the country that they do get rich.

Ran. Can't a man give away what belongs to him as he chooses?

Ash. Undoubtedly, when the spirit of gift is what

animated him. But no man can use his own right for the destruction of another when the destruction of that other is the sole thing he desires to accomplish. You have a perfect right to throw a bombshell at night into your backyard to amuse yourself with the sparks emitted at its explosion. But if there are some people in your backyard whom you want to multilate, you can't mutilate them with your bomb and then say you were only amusing yourself with your bomb explosion. The purpose and intention to hurt the people makes the exercise of your right to throw bombs into your backyard vicious.

Ran. You think, then, the courts will forbid Hogbloom to sell his goods below cost to destroy my business

Ash. I do not say I think the courts will do it. But I say that I think they ought to do it. I believe that to be our law. I believe the duck case contains the element and spirit of our laws, and I think the courts ought to enforce the principle involved in it.

Ran. Well, Mr. Ashton, when Hogbloom and I get fairly engaged I want you to take charge of my case and see if you cannot have him stopped in his piratical war upon me. I am very busy just now, but I would like to talk this matter over with you further. I will thank you to call at my house to-night that we may consider it more at large.

Ash. I will do so.

(*He goes out.*)

ACT II.

SCENE 12—Mr. Randolph's *parlor. A servant ushers* Mr. Ashton *in. Enter* Miss Celeste.

Celeste. Good evening, Mr. Ashton. Papa was unavoidably called away this afternoon, and he requested me to see you when you came and explain to you.

Ashton. That is all right, Miss Celeste. I can call another time.

Cel. Well Mr. Ashton, I hope you have somewhat modified the very cynical views you gave utterance to the last time I saw you.

Ash. I have, Miss Celeste. I do not feel so bitterly towards the world as I did then.

Cel. Why should you have felt bitterly towards the world? I know no one who had better reason to feel kindly towards it. You had many friends, you were uni-

versally respected and beloved, you stood at the head of your profession and had prosperity secured. Why should you not have been happy?

Ash. Because I was denied that without which all the rest was without value to me. I wanted you. With you my life would have been one long delight, although I had nothing. Without you I was condemned to misery although I commanded all the wealth of all the trusts.

(CELESTE *remains silent.*)

Ash. Why are you silent, Celeste. Is it possible you are beginning to feel some interest in me?

Cel. Mr. Ashton, I cannot deny that I feel a greater interest in you than I did. But I do not love you and I cannot encourage you to think that I will. But even if I were becoming interested in you, how could you expect my interest to keep up with such reports as I hear coming from you?

Ash. You have heard of it, then ?

Cel. Of course I have. Everybody has.

Ash. Celeste, you drove me to it. But I have taken a grip upon myself, and I have got myself thoroughly in hand again. You will hear no more evil reports about me.

Cel. Oh, Mr. Ashton, I am so delighted to hear that.

Ash. And wont you own up that you are beginning to care a little bit for me?

Cel. Don't press me any further to-night, Mr. Ashton? Leave me alone and let me think over the matter?

Ash. Leave you alone? Rather will I perish.

(*He seizes* CELESTE *in his arms and covers her mouth with kisses. She resists at first, but gradually submits.*)

Ash. Oh, my darling, then you do really love me? Why have you kept me miserable so long?

Cel. Oh, here comes Sarah. Really you must go.

(*Exit Ashton. .Curtain falls.*) . .

ACT III.

SCENE 1—CELESTE RANDOLPH'S *sitting room.* CELESTE *sitting, her maid,* SARAH, *standing near.*

Celeste. Sarah, what report does Tom Jones make to you these days about Mr. Ashton's habits?

Sarah. Go away, Miss Celeste, you know that since you and Mr. Ashton made up, he is another man. You know he is his own self, and just as steady as the old preacher at St. Mark's.

Cel. Why do you say since we made up? What had that to do with it?

Sar. You know it had everything to do with it. You know your falling out with him was what upset him, and you know that your making up with him was what got him back right. Miss Celeste, you ain't going to give up your old servant maid when you and Mr. Ashton gets married, are you?

Cel. When Mr. Ashton and I get married? Why, what put such an idea in your head, Sarah?

Sarah. Oh, go away, Miss Celeste, you don't fool me. I know all about it. I know how you done changed just as much as Mr. Ashton. You done got just as happy as he is. You can't fool Sarah.

Cel. Well, never mind about fooling you, Sarah. But you need not fear that anything that happens is going to make me give you up. By the way, wasn't that odious young Hogbloom here last evening?

Sarah. Yes, Miss; he calls nearly every day. Sometimes I tell him you are out, when I know you are in, but last evening you really were out when he called.

Cel. He is the pest of my life, but the enmity of his father to papa might mean so much to papa that I feel compelled to receive him when he calls and be polite to him.

Sarah. Well, you been receiving him a heap, and I expect Mr. Ashton is going to get right tired of his coming here so much.

Cel. Mr. Ashton has got nothing to do with who visits me. Besides he is a good friend of mine and will be glad to think I am enjoying myself.

Sarah. Oh, yes, I know that, but young gentlemen don't relish the idea of other young men being intimate with their sweethearts, especially when the other gentleman has got money enough to buy out the whole shebang.

Cel. Sarah, don't talk such nonsense, I couldn't marry him. But get my hat and coat, I am going out for a walk.

(*Exunt.*)

ACT III.

SCENE 2—MR. RANDOLPH'S *office at the works.* MR. RANDOLPH *sitting.* TOM BOLLEN *enters.*

Ran. Well, Tom, it is now a year and half since the trust declared war upon us and in that time they have made the pace a pretty hot one for us.

Bol. They have, indeed, sir. The cruel war they have waged against us is simply outrageous.

Ran. Yes, Tom, I can't help feeling very bitterly towards them. We had a happy family here of five thousand men and women and children, all contented and a great proportion of them helpless little children. They deliberately plotted to break this family up and scatter its members broadcast over the earth, the little children to freeze and starve unless good luck or charity provided for them.

Bol. What we have had to encounter does not seem to be right. Our drummers report from all directions that wherever they go they find our customers supplied with our goods at from fifteen to twenty per cent. less than they can be produced for. We cannot, of course, stand such competition as that.

Ran. No, Tom, it must soon ruin us if we get no relief from the law. I have mortgaged the works for every dollar I can get on them, and I have mortgaged everything I have outside of the works for all I can get on it, and the end of my purse is well near in sight. We are ruined unless we can get some help from the law.

Bol. Well, Mr. Randolph, the men have all stood by you like heroes. We have cut down wages from time to time as the pressure got heavier, and there has never been a murmer. The wages are now almost starvation wages, but the men work away with a will and never utter a complaint. In addition almost all of them own their little homes, and they have all mortgaged them to eke out a living. I declare, sir, it almost breaks my heart to go amongst their homes and see how near they are to destitution, when I think of how prosperous and contented they all were a year and a half ago.

Ran. Oh, Tom, it breaks a man's heart.

Bol. Mr. Randolph, you spoke of the law assisting you. What can the law do for you?

Ran. Well, Tom, Mr. Ashton, whom I look on as one of

the first lawyers in this country, advises me that he thinks the courts ought to forbid the trust to make this piratical war upon me. I have instructed him to take the necessary steps for bringing the matter to a test. Ah, I see him coming now. He will enlighten us about our chances.

(*Enter* ASHTON.)

Ran. Well, Mr. Ashton, how are things going on?

Ash. Well, sir, I have applied to the United States Circuit Court for an injunction to stop the trust from giving their goods away or selling them below cost for the purpose of destroying you. The case is set for hearing next week, and we shall then know what can be done.

Ran. Mr. Ashton, I hope you will do all you can to get a speedy decision of the case. I had as well be frank with you, sir. I am wholly ruined unless the court enjoins the trust and compels them to stop their selfish and unlawful competition. I can hold out but a little while longer.

Ash. That is dreadful, sir, and I cannot promise that the court will take the same view of the law that I take. The truth is that while, in my opinion the principles of the common law forbid such practices as this trust resorts to the legislature ought to take hold of the subject. Whether their course is contrary to the principles of our laws or not, there can be no doubt that it is unjust, immoral and against all sound public policy, and, if it is not unlawful the legislature should make it unlawful. The Congress of the United States should deal with it so far as it concerns interstate commerce, and each State should deal with it so far as it concerns intrastate commerce, and officers of the trust who can be convicted of taking part in such practices should be sent to the penitentiary to wear striped clothes and have shaved heads.

Ran. I think that a sound and conservative view, though being one of the trust's victims, nobody would pay much attention to my opinion. Let me hear from you as soon as you know anything, because I have absolute ruin staring me directly in the face.

(*Exit* ASHTON. *Enter* MRS. BRADLAW, *wife of one of* RANDOLPH'S *workmen, with her three little children.*)

Mrs. Bradlaw. Mr. Randolph, I am the wife of John Bradlaw, one of your most trusted workmen, and we

have three little children, the oldest only seven years old; my husband has stood by you through thick and thin, and he is going to stand by you to the end, but I don't see how we are going to continue to live. His wages have been cut down until they will not support us, and we have mortgaged our little home to help us to live; the interest upon that mortgage is now due, and we have no money to pay it with, and our home is going to be sold over our heads. Can't you help us a little?

Ran. My God, Mrs. Bradlaw, you break my heart. How many of the others are in your fix?

Mrs. Bradlaw. Nearly all of them, sir.

Ran. How much is your overdue interest?

Mrs. Bradlaw. Thirty dollars, sir.

Ran. Well, here is the money. Go and pay your interest and save your home. But I shall probably be without a home myself in a very short time.

(*Exunt both.*)

ACT III.

SCENE 3—Mr. Randolph's *parlor.* Celeste Randolph *sitting Servant brings her a card.*

Celeste. Ask him in, John.

(*Enter* St.George Ashton, *who takes* Celeste *in his arms and kisses her passionately.*)

Ash. My darling, twenty-four hours have intervened since I saw you, and I feel as though it had been an age.

Cel. What have you been doing in that time?

Ash. Working on your father's case. It will be argued to-morrow.

Cel. Oh, Mr. Ashton, will it. Poor papa is almost distracted. He says he is utterly ruined if you lose it, and that we will all be beggers in the street.

Ash. My darling, you know I am going to do my very best. It is bad enough to think of your father being ruined, but to think of you being reduced to destitution—oh, I can't bear the thought.

Cel. I think nothing about myself. It is only of poor papa that I think. I don't believe he will survive the distress and mortification of seeing his plant sold at auction and his workmen with their families dispersed.

Ash. But it will not be so bad, Celeste, I am doing

splendidly. I am making an income of twenty thousand dollars a year. We will be married at once and I will take care of your papa.

Cel. No, Mr. Ashton, I cannot marry you. Papa will be too proud to live upon your generosity, and I shall stay with him and comfort him as long as he lives. I'm afraid it will not be long.

Ash. Come, come, Celeste, I will not listen to that sort of talk. You must marry me right away and avoid all danger of distress to either yourself or your father.

Cel. I cannot do it, Mr. Ashton. I have thought over the whole thing and cried over it all night, and I see my duty plainly before me. I must remain with my father. My mother and brother are dead, and he has no one to lean on but me.

Ash. Oh, well, I haven't lost his case yet. Maybe I'll win it, and everything may come out all right. We will postpone further discussion of the subject until the court decides. Meantime, I must go and give my whole mind to preparing for the argument.

((*Exit.*)

ACT III.

SCENE 4—*The street. Enter* RANDOLPH *and* HOGBLOOM *from opposite directions.*

Hog. Ah, Mr. Randolph, good morning; and so you are going to try and stop us in our regular business by a decree of court, are you?

Ran. Regular business? You mean regular piracy.

Hog. Well, Mr. Randolph, hard words don't bring many dollars; and so you really believe you can get Judge Tubercle to stop us from going along with our business in our regular way?

Ran. Mr. Hogbloom, I don't know what sort of a pull you may have with Judge Tubercle; but if he is a just judge he will find some way to stop you from taking the bread out of the mouths of poor women and little children, to swell the enormous income that you already enjoy.

Hog. Sir; the rights of property are superior to all other rights; our laws are made to protect property, and if this country is going to start upon a course of denying the protection of the laws to property, in a very short time we will have anarchy here.

Ran. Mr. Hogbloom, I am as conservative a man as lives. But there are some things in this life that come ahead of property conservatism and even of law itself; and they are humanity and justice. I have but little respect for the law that protects property at the expense of humanity and justice, and sir, I want to say to you that I do not believe this ever happens if the law has a free course. We sometimes see what we take to be this, but they are cases where tricksters and shysters have perverted the laws and prostituted them to ends and aims that the laws abhor; and yours, Mr. Hogbloom, is just one of those cases. Humanity, justice, and the true spirit of our laws rise up in protest against what you are about to do to my plant and my workmen, and the pettifoggers and vermin of the law, hired to do so by your money are finding you ways to get its apparent sanction for your piracy and other crimes against the law. The protection of property, Mr.Hogbloom, lies at the foundation of all social order. But you, and the men like you, stealing the livery of heaven to serve the devil in pervert the laws to get pretexts for robbing other men of what belongs to them, and being in the possession of stolen goods you raise a great outcry about the necessity of protecting property, the real purpose being to protect you in what you have stolen. Your clamor is a false clamor, and the world will find you out in time and it will protect property and expose you naked to the scorn of mankind also.

Hog. Well, Mr. Randolph, when we have sold you out, perhaps you will repent these hard words.

Ran. I think it very probable that you will sell me out. But in my penury and want, I had rather endure my fate than to ride in your luxurious automobiles, pursued by the curses of my one thousand honest workmen, and haunted by the tears of their wives and little children. May you enjoy the feasts that are sweetened for you with those tears. Good day, sir.

They separate and go out.

ACT III.

SCENE 5—Mr. Randolph's *parlor*. Celeste *sitting in it. Enter* Sarah *with a card.*

Cel. Show him in.

Young Hog. Good evening, Miss Randolph. Its an age since I saw you.

Cel. Time passes so rapidly with me that it seems but yesterday that I saw you, Mr. Hogbloom.

Young Hog. And why should time pass so rapidly wth you? Are you so very happy?

Cel. Upon the contrary, I am very wretched.

Young Hog. And why should you be wretched. You are so beautiful, so cultivated, so charming, indeed, in every way. It looks like a profanation of nature's gift for you to complain of unhappiness.

Cel. Mr. Hogbloom, if you had a father like mine, who had ruin staring him in the face, you would be wretched, too, when you saw what he endures.

Young Hog. Miss Randolph, that brings from me what I have been dying to say for some time. I love you with all my heart and soul. Marry me and your father's ruin will be a matter of no consequence; my father is enormously wealthy and he will provide for us so liberally that you can take care of your father in his misfortunes.

Cel. Mr. Hogbloom, I do not love you, and therefore cannot marry you.

Young Hog. You absolutely refuse, then, to marry me?

Cel. I do.

Young Hog. Then, listen to me. Your father is being ruined by my father. My father is devoted to me and will do whatever I ask him to do. If you will marry me I will go to my father and ask him to stop the pressure on your father's works, he will do it, and your father will be saved from ruin, and will again become a prosperous man.

(CELESTE *averts her face and is silent.*)

Young Hog. You are hesitating, then?

Cel. How can I help hesitating, Mr. Hogbloom, with such a father?

Young Hog. Then, marry me and become a happy woman.

Cel. Mr. Hogbloom, I cannot refuse under the circumstances.

(HOGBLOOM *attempts to seize her and kiss her. She struggles and escapes from him.*)

Cel. Mr. Hogbloom, when we leave the altar, I will be yours and shall have to submit to whatever is your will, but until then you must leave me my entire liberty. Please leave me now.

(HOGBLOOM *hesitates about leaving.*)

Cel. Mr. Hogbloom, you must leave me now, I am in such a nervous condition that I require absolute solitude. Please go.

(HOGBLOOM *goes out.*)

(CELESTE *bursts into a flood of tears and weeps as if her heart would break. Enter* SARAH.)

Sar. Why, what is the matter, Miss Celeste?

Cel. Oh, Sarah, I wish I was dead.

Sar. Why, what is the matter?

Cel. Well, Sarah, you know that odious old Hogbloom has driven papa to the wall, and that he has ruin directly before him. Young Hogbloom has proposed to me and has promised that if I would marry him he would get his father to let up on papa and give him an opportunity to restore himself. What could I do. I abhor him and I love another man with all my heart. But what could I do? I had to accept him and I have done it. I have got to marry him, and I would rather be dead.

Sar. Poor Miss Celeste, you have had hard luck. But Miss Celeste, this shan't be, you shan't be sacrificed for your father's sake.

Cel. It must be, Sarah. I must bid farewell to all I love in life; my father must be saved.

Sar. I tell you, Miss Celeste, it shan't be. I know what I am talking about. Come, go to your room and lie down and get yourself composed.

(*Exunt.*)

ACT III.

SCENE 4—MR. RANDOLPH'S *parlor. Celeste sitting in it. Enter butler with a card which he presents to her.*)

Celeste. Show him in.

(*Enter* ST. GEORGE ASHTON.)

(ASHTON *seizing* CELESTE *in his arms and endeavoring to kiss her.* CELESTE *resists, but her resistance gradually subsides.*)

Cel. Oh, ST. GEORGE, don't, please don't, you do not know what you are doing.

Ashton. Why don't I know what I am doing. I am hugging and kissing my own sweetheart, and if a man can't do that, I would like to know whose sweetheart he can hug and kiss.

Cel. (*leaning her head on his shoulder and beginning to cry*) Oh, but you don't know.

Ash. But what is it I don't know?

Cel. Oh, it is too awful to think of.

Ash. Why, Celeste, what can all this mean

Cel. Young Mr. Hogbloom has proposed to me. I rejcctet him, of coorse. He then said in effect that his father had my father by the throat, and was strangling him to death. That his father was devoted to him, and would do whatever he asked him to do. That if I would marry him he would appeal to his father to release his hold on papa, and that papa would be restored to his old time position and business. What could I say in answer to that? I had to say I would marry him, and I am going to do it.

Ash. Do you mean to say that dog made such a proposition to you?

Cel. He certainly did, and I have agreed to marry him.

Ash. You shall not do it, by God. I will kill him before he shall force you into such a sacrifice.

Cel. No, St. George, you must not interfere, you do not know what a papa mine has been to me. Forcing him into bankruptcy is going to kill him, and it is my duty to save him at all cost and hazard.

Ash. But, Celeste, I am a prosperous man; marry me and I will give your father a home and he shall never want for anything.

Cel. You don't know papa. The sale of his plant and the scattering of his workmen will be more than he can stand. No, it is an awful sacrifice, but my duty calls upon me to make it and I must make it.

(*She buries her head in* ASHTON'S *bosom and weeps hysterically.* ASHTON *strokes her hair.*)

Ash. Poor Celeste, you are a noble girl, and what you propose is prompted by a heart of gold, but it shall not be. I swear by the Almighty God that it shall not be, if I have to kill that dog, Hogbloom, to prevent it.

Cel. Oh, St. George, don't talk that way. Think of my having to give you up and also to endure the agony of your being prosecuted for murder.

Ash. I can't help it, Celeste, you shall not be forced into this sacrifice. Listen, I am not going to do anything rash, but I am going to stop the further prosecution of

this awful crime. You get calm and wait until you hear further from me; meantime I must go.

(*Exit.*)

ACT III.

SCENE 5—*The street.* ASHTON *meets young* HOGBLOOM.

Ashton. How do you do, Mr. Hogbloom. I have some very important business to discuss with you, and I will go to your office and discuss it there, or you can come to my office and we will discuss it there.

Young Hogbloom. Oh, it is a matter of indifference to me to which office we go. I will go with you to yours.

Ash. Very well.; come along.

(*They enter* ASHTON'S *office and are seated on opposite sides of a table.*)

Ash. Mr. Hogbloom, I have been devotedly in love with Miss Celeste Randolph for a long time, and she responds to my love. I am just from her and she told me of your proposition to her and that she promised to marry you if you would get your father to let up on her father. Mr. Hogbloom, Celeste Randolph loves me, and I love her. I want to appeal to you as man to man to keep out of this affair and let nature have its course.

Young Hog. (*Haughtily*) Mr. Ashton, you must excuse me. I don't propose to discuss my private affairs with you.

Ash. But, Mr. Hogbloom, this is a matter which involves the very existence of Miss Randolph and myself. I tell you it will kill her if you force her to marry you to save her father; as for me I don't expect you to give much consideration to my fate, but it would be the ending of me.

Young Hog. Your fate is a matter of no concern to me. As for Miss Randolph, I know very well that she will be happy with a husband who devotes his whole life to her and I shall do that.

Ash. Then, you are immovable? You will call for the whole penalty of the bond?

Young Hog. I shall marry Miss Randolph if I can induce her to morry me.

Ash. Very well, let the best man win.

(*Goes to a book case and takes from it two Smith and Wesson 44 calibre revolvers.*)

Now listen to me, sir. You shall not force this sacrifice on her while I am alive. I am going to place these two revolvers on this table midway between us two, the handle of one turned to you, the handle of the other turned to me. At the word fire from me we will each sieze a revolver and fire as quickly as possible. If you survive and can get Miss Randolph to marry you, then you will have won her. Prepare, sir for your last day on earth, if I can kill you.

Young Hog. Oh, Mr. Ashton, you would not murder me?

Ash. Not more than you would murder me. It is going to be an open, fair combat, with the prize to the survivor.

Young Hog. But I don't want to engage in a combat.

Ash. Its a matter of no consequence to me what you wish. You are going to force this pure and angelic girl into the most horrible sacrifice that a woman can be driven into, and I tell you you shant do it while I am alive. Come, get ready.

Young Hog. But, Mr. Ashton, this is barbaric and uncivilized.

Ash. Barbaric and uncivilized be dammed. I tell you to get ready. I am going to put these two revolvers on the table and give the word "fire." You will be a dead man in the next five minutes unless you kill me.

(*Places the revolvers on the table.*)

Young Hog. Well, sir, if you will have it so, give the word?

Ash. Fire.

(*Each one seizes a pistol.* ASHTON'S *misses fire.* HOGBLOOM *fires.* ASHTON *falls to the floor...*HOGBLOOM *looks around for a bell. Sees the button and presses it.* TOM *the janitor, and* JENNY, *the janitress come into the room.*

Young Hog. Mr. Ashton, there forced a duel upon me with these pistols you see here and I have shot him, do what is necessary to take care of him.

(*Exit.*)

(TOM *goes to* ASHTON *and raises his head.*)

TOM. Oh, Jenny, he is alive. He is breathing.

Jenny. We must get him up and get him to his bedroom.

(ASHTON *moves a little and looks around.*)

Ash. Oh, Jenny, you and TOM are the people to have charge of me. Get me to my room and send for Dr. Brown.

(*They carry* ASHTON *out.*)

ACT III.

SCENE 7—MR. RANDOLPH *in his parlor.* SARAH *enters.*

Randolph. Well, Sarah, what is it?

Sarah. Mr. Randolph, a great crime is about to be committed in your house, and I am going to tell you about it, and you must stop it.

Rand. Why, certainly, Sarah, I will put an end to it. But, what is it?

Sar. That young Mr. Hogbloom has been courting Miss Celeste, and she hates him. But he has told her that if she will marry him he will get his father to let up on you and restore your business to you, and she has agreed to do it, and it is about killing her because she loves Mr. Ashton with all her heart and he loves her the same. Mr. Randolph that thing must be stopped and that poor young thing must be saved.

Ran. Why, of course it must, Sarah. Go tell Celeste to come here at once.

(SARAH *goes out.* CELESTE *enters.*)

Ran. Celeste, Sarah tells me that you are going to sacrifice yourself by marrying young Hogbloom to save me from ruin?

Cel. Papa, Sarah ought not to have told you that.

Ran. Never mind about that. I want to know whether it is a fact?

Cel. Well, papa, I have agreed to marry him.

Ran. And you do not love him

Cel. I cannot say that I do.

Rand. And you are marrying him solely to save me?

Cel. Papa, it was my duty to do it.

(RANDOLPH *taking* CELESTE *in his arms.*)

It was a noble and heroic resolution in you my darling child, but it must not be. I cannot permit it, my child.

Cel. But, papa, it is the only way to save you from ruin, and I am perfectly ready for the sacrifice.

Ran. I tell you, my child, that it cannot be. I positively prohibit it. Go and write Mr. Hogbloom a letter, telling him that I have got on to it and that I forbid it.

Cel. But papa, what is to become of you?

Ran. Become of me? Do you suppose I would allow myself to be saved at the expense of my child's happiness. What do you take me for? Go and do as I command you. I tell you in all seriousness that if you do not break this thing off, I will set fire to the works and burn them down. Why, Celeste, I would murder you before this thing should occur.

Cel. Well, papa, if you take this thing so much to heart I shall have to do as you require. I will write to Mr. Hogbloom ending it all.

(*Enter* SARAH *with a newspaper.*)

Sar. Oh, Miss Celeste, it is terrible.

Cel. What is the matter, Sarah?

Sar. Young Mr. Hogbloom has shot Mr. Ashton.

Cel. What, give me the paper. (*Reads.*) "Young Mr. Hogbloom, son of the president of the Trust, shot Mr. St. George Ashton in the latter's office to-day and wounded him desperately. The wounded man has a chance to recover, but his fate is very uncertain. Hogbloom says Ashton forced a duel on him and he shot him in self defense."

Cel. Oh, this is awful, papa; it is all about me. I love Mr. Ashton with all my heart, and he loves me. I told him of my engagement to Hogbloom, and he left me saying he would not permit the sacrifice to be made, and that he would kill Hogbloom first. He has forced a difficulty on Mr. Hogbloom, who has shot him. Papa I am going to throw all maidenly scruples aside and go to Mr. Ashton and nurse him and try to save his life.

Ran. My dear daughter, I entirely approve of your resolution. ffl

ACT III.

SCENE 8—ASHTON'S *bed room.* ASHTON *on his bed,* TOM *and* JENNY *standing around. Enter* CELESTE RANDOLPH. *She approaches the bedside very softly.* ASHTON *hears her and turns his eyes towards her.*

Ashton. Oh, Celeste, this is so good of you.

Cel. The doctor says you must be kept perfectly quiet and you will get well.

Ash. I must tell you this. At the critical moment when we were firing I caught the dog's eye. He was frightened to death, and I don't believe h could have fired. My pistol missed fire and he saw he had me. I saw a savage glare come in his eye, and he shot me down as if I were a dog.

Cel. Well, well, don't say anything more. Keep perfectly quiet and you will get well. I am going to nurse you through it and I shall never leave you again.

Ash. Oh, Celeste, you are an angel.

(*Scene closes.*)

ACT III.

SCENE 9—MR. RANDOLPH'S *office*. *Enter* RANDOLPH.

Randolph. Well, Mr. Ashton pulled through and has got back to his practice. I am looking for him at any time, now, to tell me what the court is going to do in my case. Unless it decides for me I am utterly ruined. My whole plant and dwelling house will be sold and I shall have no shelter for myself and daughter.

Ran. Well, Mr. Ashton, what news do you bring me from the court?

Ash. Judge Tubercle has decided the case against you and refused the injunction.

Ran. Gracious God, then I am lost. I am turned out in the street, Ashton. Everything I have will be sold out under the mortgage next week, and my workmen and their families will be turned out of doors. Did the judge give no reason for his decision?

Ash. Oh, yes, sir. He admitted the force of the duck case. He also admitted that the English House of Lords has within the last few years affirmed the doctrines of the duck case in the Mogul Steamship case. But, he said, the House of Lords has since decided in the case of *Allen* vs. *Flood*, that motive and intention are of no importance in determining whether an act is lawful or unlawful; and that as the trust has the legal right to give its goods away, giving them away to destroy you cannot make the act illegal. He is all wrong, but we must all bow to his decree.

Ran. It would be interesting to know what part the trust's money played in Judge Tubercle's dicision. Well, since the tribunals of the law declare that to be the law, we must all, of course, submit to it. But it is founded

in radical injustice and wrong. I don't mind my own fate so much. I will find some way to get a shelter and a crust of bread for myself and my daughter. But when I think of my faithful men and their families being turned out of their homes and scattered over the face of the earth, it is too much for me.

Ash. Mr. Randolph, I have a home and I am doing splendidly in my profession. I invite you and your daughter to make my home your home until you can see your way to doing something else.

Ran. That is very kind of you, sir. I shall have to look around and see what is to be done.

(*Exunt both.*)

SCENE 10.—RANDOLPH'S *works. An auction flag hanging out. A boy walking about ringing a bell* RANDOLPH, ASHTON; BOLLEN, *auctioneer;* FRED JONES, *a junk dealer, two other citizens who want the property,* HOGBLOOM, SWINEHURST, BLOATBOND, *workmen,* BINGHAM *and* BRADLAW, *and a dozen other of the workmen,* MRS. BINGHAM, *and* MRS. BRADLAW *with the little children, and wives of a dozen other workmen, the women in tears, and the children clinging to them.*

Auctioneer. What are you doing here, Fred Jones? You are a junk dealer. You don't expect to buy this plant as junk, do you?

Jones. That is just what I expect to do.

First Citizen. And why shouldn't he? The trust has killed it as a manufacturing plant. I don't see what anybody wants it for, except for junk. Nobody will attempt to run it in opposition to the trust.

Hog. (*aside to* SWINEHURST *and* BLOATBEND.) He shan't have it as junk. No manufacturer, of course, is going to bid against us, but we will outbid the junk dealer. We will buy the plant and close it up, but sometime in the future it may come in handy.

Auc. How much am I offered for this splendid plant, gentlemen?

Jones. I will give $25,000.

Auc. What, $25,000 for a plant that cost a million, and has many years earned twenty per cent. on its cost? Its ridiculous.

Hog. I bid $50,000.

Jones. That's more than its worth as junk, and he may have it for me.

Auc. Are there no other bids Once, twice, three times. Knocked out to Mr. Hogbloom for $50,000.

Ran. That is the end of me. I am stripped as naked as I was when I came into the world. I suppose they are now going to sell the homes of my workmen

Auc. I will now offer you, gentlemen, the home of Bradlaw, one of Mr. Randolph's workmen, under a mortgage on it for $500. It is well worth $2,000.

First Citizen. Who is going to give anything like its value for it? The trust is going to close up the plant and nobody cares to live out here if the plant stops operations.

Mrs. Bradlaw, (*to Auctioneer*). For heaven's sake, sir, don't sell our home? I and these little ones have nowhere to go if you turn us of our home.

(*She turns to* HOGBLOOM *and addresses him*)

Mrs. Bradlaw. Mr. Hogbloom, can't you stop this sale? What is to become of me and these little ones if you turn us out of our home?

Mrs. Ingham (*in tears her little children clinging to her*). *To* HOGBLOOM Can't you stop the sale of my house, too, sir? These little children and I have nowhere to go if you turn us out.

Hog. Ladies, I am very sorry for you. But you must know that progressive business can't be interfered with by the misfortunes of individuals. Why, dividends on stocks would cease altogether if we listened to such pleas as you make. Auctioneer, proceed with the sale.

Ran. (*aside to* ASHTON). When the devil gets that fellow, Hogbloom, he will begin burning him at the ends of his toes, and he will burn him inch by inch with slow fire until he gets to the top of his head, and then he will not do to him one-half of what ought to be done to him.

Auc. What am I offered for Mr. Bradlaw's house? It cost all of $2,000.

Hog. I bid $100.

Auc. Are there no other bidders? Knocked out to Mr. Hogbloom for $100. I will now offer Mr. Ingham's house. It cost $1,500, has a mortgage on it for $350, and is well

worth every cent of what it cost. What am I offered for it?

Hog. I bid $75.

Auc. Are you all done? Knocked out to Mr. Hogbloom for $75.

Ran. (*to* ASHTON). This is too sickening for me. I can't stand it. Come, walk around to my house with me. Its the last day I can invite you there. They are going to sell it to-morrow

(RANDOLPH *and* ASHTON *go out.*)

Hog. (*to Auctioneer*). Postpone further sales until to-morrow. I have a business engagement that compels me to leave.

Auc. Gentlemen, the further sale is postponed until to-morrow.

(*All go out.*)

SCENE 11—*Mr.* RANDOLPH'S *parlor.* CELESTE RANDOLPH *sitting there. Enter* RANDOLPH *and* ASHTON.

Ran. Well, my daughter; it is all over and we are beggars in the street.

Cel. Don't take it to heart so, papa. I shall stick to you, and together we shall get something to do that will give us a shelter and bread.

Ran. You are mistaken, my dear. I don't take it seriously to heart, as far as I am concerned. My only concern is about you and my poor workmen. I will be able to take care of myself, but the privations you will have to submit to distress me greatly.

Ash. Mr. Randolph, I love your daughter better than I love my own life, and she returns my love. We have been engaged to be married for some time, but she refuses to marry me now, thinking it is her duty to remain with you in your misfortunes. I am a prosperous man, I can give her a home, and our home shall be yours until you can find something better. Do use your influence with Celeste and make her see that it is her duty to marry me at once.

Ran. My daughter, if you love this gentleman, you certainly ought to marry him.

Cel. Papa, I do love him, but I think I ought to stand by you.

Ran. My dear, that is the way to stand by me. I forbade you to marry Hogbloom, I now command you to marry Ashton.

Cel. Well, if you and Mr. Ashton say so, I have nothing more to say.

(*Curtain falls.*)